Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 069354
ORIGIN DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 OES-07 NAS-01 /043 R

DRAFTED BY S/AR:AGJAMES/MW
APPROVED BY S/AR:ELRICHARDSON
D/LOS:RBLUMBERG (DRAFT)
D/LOS:ADBERLIND (DRAFT)
EUR/SOV:
----------035033 180025Z /46
P R 172158Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069354

FOR AMBASSADOR TOON FROM AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, SU

SUBJECT: LOS: SOVIET POSITION ON MARINE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

1. WHEN YURI ARBATOV WAS HERE IN FEBRUARY, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO FIND THE RIGHT OCCASION TO TALK WITH HIM ABOUT THE SOVIET POSITION ON MARINE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. GETTING A FEW IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE PRESENT NEGOTIATING TEXT IS A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO US AND THE US SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY. UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE BEEN FAIRLY ISOLATED ON MSR AT THE CONFERENCE, AND THE CHANCES OF GETTING THE CHANGES WE WANT ARE NOT PROMISING. HOWEVER MARGINAL, IT SEEMED TO ME NONETHELESS WORTH MAKING AN EFFORT WITH ARBATOV TO SEE IF HE WOULD BE DISPOSED TO USE HIS INFLUENCE TO GET SOME SOVIET FLEXIBILITY
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ON MSR.

2. DR. PHILIP HANDLER, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, AT MY SUGGESTION, OFFERED ARBATOV A LUNCH ON FEBRUARY 14 WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL EMINENT US SCIENTISTS AND MYSELF. THE SETTING WAS VERY INFORMAL, AND THE DISCUSSION OF MSR GENERAL. DURING LUNCH, I NOTED

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TO ARBATOV THAT, UNLIKE THE US DELEGATION IN WHICH US SCIENTISTS HAD PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN SHAPING OUR MARINE SCIENCE POSITION AT THE CONFERENCE, SOVIET SCIENTISTS SEEMED TO HAVE LITTLE OR NO INFLUENCE ON THE SOVIET LOS SCIENCE POSITION. AS A RESULT THE SOVIET DELEGATION HAS TAKEN A RIGID POSITION SUPPORTING AN EXTREMELY RESTRICTIVE REGIME FOR MARINE SCIENCE THAT IS DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE TO THE US POSITION AND ONE THAT WILL SEVERELY RESTRICT THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF FUTURE MARINE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. THIS SUBJECT, I STRESSED, SHOULD BE A MATTER OF CONCERN TO SOVIET AS WELL AS US SCIENTISTS. ARBATOV COMMENTED THAT PERHAPS THE SOVIET SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY HAD NOT HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD BY THEIR LOS DELEGATION OR POLICY MAKERS IN MOSCOW. HE PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER ON HIS RETURN TO MOSCOW.

3. I WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD FIND A CONVENIENT OPPORTUNITY TO ASK ARBATOV WHAT HE HAS DONE TO FOLLOW UP OUR CONVERSATION AND WHAT, IF ANY, REACTION HE HAS HAD. I DO NOT FRANKLY EXPECT ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION, ALTHOUGH SOVIET READINESS TO CONSIDER SOME OF THE PROVISIONS WE WISH TO SEE IMPROVED WOULD HELP US WITH OUR SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY.

4. I LEAVE FOR GENEVA MARCH 19 AND WILL BE THERE UNTIL LATE MAY FOR THE 7TH SESSION OF THE LOS CONFERENCE. WHEN
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YOU HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO TALK TO ARBATOV WOULD YOU LET ME KNOW THE RESULTS IN GENEVA.WARM REGARDS, ELLIOT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RESEARCH, POLICIES, TERRITORIAL WATERS, OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE069354
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AGJAMES/MW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780120-0184
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780353/aaaabspw.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: aeae7cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN DLOS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3286724
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LOS: SOVIET POSITION ON MARINE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
TAGS: PLOS, UR, US
To: MOSCOW
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/aeae7cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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